

LAYING THE DEBT GHOST.

BOARD OF ESTIMATE AUTHORIZES \$25,000,000 BONDS.

\$25,000,000 Were These Authorized Last Year But Not Issued? This Board Said \$25,000,000—Holds Up the Bill of Records Improvement—Will Try to Break the Contract.

The Board of Estimate of the City of New York, by a unanimous vote, has authorized today all the bonds for public improvement which were voted for by the Strong administration in the last days of its official life. One of the improvements held up was the Hall of Records, which was stricken from the list at the same time. President (Guglielmo) had been told that the building could be built for at least \$800,000 less than the price at which the contract had been let. The total amount of bonds authorized yesterday under one resolution introduced by Comptroller Coker was \$17,337,016.37, and to these were added new bonds to the amount of \$7,737,566, making the total issue over \$25,000,000.

Attached to the resolution Mr. Coker made a long report which contained a very brief reference to the fact that the Corporation Counsel's opinion had wiped out the "excess." The Comptroller gave an account of the bonds authorized by the Board of Estimate, amounting to \$21,371,000.28 which had never been sold, and he advocated the reauthorization of \$19,437,166.7 of them at once so that the contracts could be carried out. His list included \$2,100,000 for the Hall of Records, President (Guglielmo) moved to strike out this item and to refer the matter to the Corporation Counsel for an opinion as to whether the city could be compelled to carry out the contract which was let in December to John Peirce for \$1,997,900.

"In my opinion," said Mr. Guglielmo, "this building can be built for \$800,000 less than the price named, and in the interest of the city at large we ought not to sanction the contract if we can get out of it."

The Mayor agreed. "I understand," he said, "that a particular kind of granite is provided for which allowed the awarding of the contract to the highest bidder. I am not sure that I understand, and to get the granite from quarries other than their own. If this contract is declared illegal we can change the plans and add from one to five stories to the building and thus provide for nearly all the city departments under one roof. The contract was referred to the Corporation Counsel."

John Peirce was the lowest as well as the highest bidder for the Hall of Records. He offered to do the work for \$1,497,000 if Fox Island granite were used, and for \$1,997,900 if granite from Hallowell, Me., was used. The old Board of Estimate voted for Hallowell granite, and the contract was awarded to Peirce at this price. The architect of the building is John R. Thomas.

Among the bonds authorized were the following:

Reconstruction fund No. 3	\$2,800,000.00
East River Park and sea wall	50,000.00
Third Avenue Bridge	95,000.00
Aqueduct Commission	1,630,000.00
Sanitary protection of water supply	100,000.00
Botanical gardens	100,000.00
St. John's Park	50,000.00
Water main extension	350,000.00
Extension of Metropolitan Museum of Art	500,000.00
Extension of Museum of Natural History	400,000.00
Riverside school	150,000.00
Improvement of parkways	100,000.00
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